

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4113
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AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 AMMAN 8930

EXDIS

NSC FOR DR. BRZEZINSKI

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PBOR, JO, XF, EG
SUBJECT: DE BORCHGRAVE INTERVIEW WITH KING HUSSEIN

REF: AMMAN 8878

BEGIN SUMMARY:

1. BELOW IS TEXT OF NEWSWEEK'S DE BORCHGRAVE'S INTERVIEW WITH KING HUSSEIN TO BE PUBLISHED IN COMING WEEK'S NEWSWEEK AND GIVEN US IN CONFIDENCE BY DE BORCHGRAVE. HE ASKED THAT IT BE HELD EXTREMELY CLOSELY. SUGGEST SPECIFICALLY THAT NO ONE IN FUTURE ALLUDE TO DE BORCHGRAVE OR TO HAVING SEEN IT PRIOR PUBLICATION.

2. HUSSEIN MAKES MANY OF SAME POINTS HE STRESSED IN PRESS CONFERENCE (SEE REFTEL). HE REFERS AGAIN TO HIS SURPRISE AT SADAT INITIATIVE COMING AS IT DID AFTER HUSSEIN HAD "MEDIATED A BASIC COMMON ARAB POSITION" FOR GENEVA. HE PRAISES SADAT'S COURAGE BUT EMPHASIZES HIS FEAR THAT IF RIFT IN
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ARAB WORLD NOT HEALED, THERE WILL BE "CONVULSIONS AND UPHEAVAL" IN AREA "AS SERIOUS AS ANOTHER ARAB-ISRAELI WAR TO ALL -- BOTH TO THE AREA AND TO WORLD PEACE;" ALSO NOTES HIS SKEPTICISM THAT ISRAEL WILL "DELIVER ITS PART OF THE PEACE PACKAGE."

3. HE REVIEWS HISTORY PRIOR RABAT DECISION, NOTING THAT

ISRAEL HAD AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO NEGOTIATE WEST BANK WITH JORDAN, AS IT NOW INSISTS IT WANTS TO, BUT NEVER DID. HUSSEIN REFERS TO NECESSITY FOR "UNTYING" RABAT DECISION BEFORE CAN JORDAN CAN BE INVOLVED, THOUGH DOES NOTE, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION CONCERNING JORDAN'S REACTION IF ISRAEL WERE TO PROPOSE RETURNING WEST BANK ONLY TO JORDAN, THAT "JORDAN WOULD FIND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO REFUSE THE LIBERATION OF ARAB LAND" IN CONTEXT OF TOTAL PEACE, RETURN TO '67 BORDERS AND SUBSEQUENT PALESTINIAN SELF-DETERMINATION, POINTING OUT, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION, THAT HE BELIEVES PALESTINIANS, GIVEN FREE CHOICE, WOULD VOTE FOR "LARGE DEGREE OF AUTONOMY COUPLED WITH STRONG CONFEDERAL LINKS WITH JORDAN." END SUMMARY

4. TEXT FOLLOWS:

QUOTE:

BORCHGRAVE -- PRIOR TO PRESIDENT SADAT'S VISIT TO JERUSALEM YOU HAD CONFERRED WITH PRESIDENTS ASSAD AND SADAT. DID YOU REACH ANY DECISIONS ABOUT GENEVA?

KING HUSSEIN -- WE DID INDEED AND THAT'S WHY I WAS SO SHOCKED AND ASTONISHED AT FIRST. PRESIDENT SADAT DID NOT GIVE ME SO MUCH AS A HINT OF WHAT HE WAS ABOUT TO DO. I HAD PERSONALLY MEDIATED A BASIC COMMON ARAB POSITION WHICH THE CONFRONTATION STATES AND THE PLO WOULD HAVE MET TO RATIFY PRIOR TO A GENEVA SUMMIT. THIS COMMON CONFIDENTIAL

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POSITION, WORKED OUT IN TWO DAYS OF TALKS WITH SADAT AND TWO VISITS TO SYRIA AND ONE TO SAUDI ARABIA, WAS ALMOST IDENTICAL TO THE ONE SPELLED OUT BY EGYPT'S PRESIDENT AT THE KNESSET.

BORCHGRAVE -- BUT THE PLO IS UNACCEPTABLE TO ISRAEL, NOT TO MENTION EGYPT, SO SADAT MUST HAVE CONCLUDED THAT THE COMMON FRONT WOULD NOT EVEN MAKE IT TO GENEVA, LET ALONE WORK OUT AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT.

KING HUSSEIN -- THE ORGANIZATION PER SE MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE BEEN ACCEPTABLE BUT THE PALESTINIANS AS SUCH, BOTH IN AND OUT SIDE THE WEST BANK AND GAZA, WOULD HAVE BEEN. THE PLO WOULD PROBABLY HAVE BEEN CALLED UPON TO NAME THEIR REPRESENTATIVES AND HELP IN THEIR SELECTION. OTHERWISE, HOW COULD THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM BE RESOLVED WITHOUT THE PALESTINIANS MAKING THEIR CONTRIBUTION TOWARD ITS SOLUTION.

BORCHGRAVE-- WHAT DO YOU THINK SADAT HAS REALLY ACCOMPLISHED?

KING HUSSEIN -- PUTTING ASIDE OUR RESERVATIONS ABOUT METHODOLOGY, IF YOU ANALYZE THE SITUATION DISPASSIONATELY, SADAT HAS BROEKN THE MOLD OF CONVENTIONAL THINKING AND DEMOLISHED PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIERS. IT TOOK AN AWFUL LOT OF MORAL COURAGE. WE ARABS MUST ALL UNDERSTAND THAT THE REAL PEACE, BY DEFINITION, WILL ENTAIL NORMAL RELATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND ITS ARAB NEIGHBORS, BUT THE ISRAELIS MUST EQUALLY UNDERSTAND THAT PEACE WILL NOT MATERIALIZE UNLESS THEY WITHDRAW BEHIND THEIR JUNE 4, 1967, RPT JUNE 4, 1967 BORDERS.

BORCHGRAVE -- SO WHY THE RESERVATIONS ABOUT SADAT'S VISIT TO ISRAEL?

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KING HUSSEIN -- BECAUSE HE GAMBLLED THE ARAB WORLD'S LAST CARD -- A UNILATERAL OFFER OF TOTAL PEACE -- WITHOUT CONSULTING ANYONE AND WITHOUT ANY ASSURANCE FROM ISRAEL THAT IT WILL LEAD TO THE OVERALL SETTLEMENT WE HAD DISCUSSED WITH SADAT JUST A FEW DAYS BEFORE. AND I REMAIN HIGHLY SKEPTICAL THAT ISRAEL WILL NOW DELIVER ITS PART OF THE PEACE PACKAGE. LOOK AT THEIR GOVERNMENT'S SETTLEMENT POLICY ON THE EST BANK. NOTHING HAS CHANGED. THERE ARE NOW 31 SETTLEMENTS ON THE WEST BANK WITH 49 NEW ONES PLANNED. THEY HAVE GONE AHEAD WITH SIX OF THEM SINCE SADAT'S VISIT.

BORCHGRAVE -- IF ASSAD HAD, IN EFFECT, AGREED TO WHAT SADAT TOLD THE KNESSET, WHY THE ANGUISHED CRIES OF TREASON FROM DAMASCUS?

KING HUSSEIN -- THERE MAY HAVE BEEN SOME ILL-THOUGHT THROUGH OVER-REACTION IN THE AREA BASED ON THE SUSPICION THAT EGYPT MAY IN THE END GO IT ALONE. BUT APART FROM THAT, IT WAS NOT EASY TO SEE SADAT IN ARAB JERUSALEM WHILE IT IS STILL UNDER ISRAELI OCCUPATION. THE WHOLE CONCEPT OF THE VISIT WAS UNIQUE IN HISTORY AND DON'T FORGET THAT EGYPT HAD PLAYED A LEADING ROLE IN ALL THE TRAGIC EVENTS CONNECTED WITH THE PALESTINIANS. HOWEVER WHAT IS NOW MOST IMPORTANT IS TO RE-ESTABLISH COHESION AMONG THE CONFRONTATION STATES. IF THIS PROVES IMPOSSIBLE, THEN YOU WILL SEE THE FULL EXTENT OF THE DAMAGE TO THE VERY CONCEPT OF A UNITED ARAB NATION. FRANKLY, WE ARE ALSO A LITTLE TIRED OF OTHERS DECIDING OUR FATE WITHOUT CONSULTING US. THIS HAPPEND IN JUNE 1967 WHEN OUR ARMY WAS UNDER EGYPTIAN ARAB COMMAND. WE PRACTICALLY COMMITTED MILITARY SUICIDE BECAUSE OF OUR UPBRINGING AND DEEP BELIEF IN ARAB ONENESS. WE MUST
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AVOID THIS IN THE FUTURE OR RUN THE RISK OF SEEING
ISRAEL'S OCCUPATION BECOME A PERMANENT ONE. SO I WILL
CONTINUE TO DEPLOY OUR EFFORTS TO RESTORE A COMMON
FRONT IN THE NEGOTIATED SEARCH FOR AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT.

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W

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P R 040801Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4114

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C O N F I D E N T I A L FINAL SECTION OF 2 AMMAN 8930

EXDIS

NSC FOR DR. BRZEZINSKI

BROCHGRAVE -- SYRIA HAS CHANGED ITS VIEWS PERCEPTIABLY
SINCE ITS ORIGINAL VIOLENT REACTION TO SADAT'S INITIATIVE.
DO YOU GET THE FEELING THAT ASSAD IS NOW BEGINNING TO
LEAN TOWARD THE CAIRO CONFERENCE?

KING HUSSEIN -- I CANNOT SPEAK FOR ASSAD BUT I THINK
THAT LOGIC WILL DICTATE A CLOSING OF RANKS. IF WE CAN
ACHIEVE THIS, THE VENUE IS NOT IMPORTANT.

BROCHGRAVE -- SADAT APPEARS TO BE TRYING TO DISPLACE THE
PLO AS THE PALESTINIANS' SOLE REPRESENTATIVE. BOTH THE
U.S. AND EGYPT, AND ISRAEL, WANT JORDAN TO RESUME ITS
MANDATE TO NEGOTIATE ISRAEL'S WITHDRAWAL FROM THE WEST
BANK. IS THIS NOW PRACTICAL?

KING HUSSEIN -- THAT IS NOT A DECISION THAT CAN BE

MADE BY ONE OR TWO COUNTRIES, HOWEVER POWERFUL. UNLESS
THE KNOT OF THE RABAT SUMMIT DECISIONS (1974) IS UNITED,
AND ARABS AND PALESTINIANS IN PARTICULAR DO SO, JORDAN
IS NOT PREPARED TO DO ANYTHING ON THEIR BEHALF. AS FOR
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ISRAEL'S ALLEGED DESIRE TO NEGOTIATE WITH JORDAN INSTEAD
OF THE PALESTINIANS THEMSELVES. I WOULD LIKE TO REMIND
YOU THAT WHEN WE DID HAVE THE MANDATE PRIOR TO RABAT,
ISRAEL REFUSED TO DEAL WITH US IN A SATISFACTORY MANNER.
WE WERE READY FOR A DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT ON OUR
FRONT IN THE SUMMER OF 74, SIMILAR RPT SIMILAR TO THE
SINAI AND GOLAN ACCORDS. BUT ISRAEL REFUSED TO MOVE
IN THIS DIRECTION. THE ISRAELI LEADERS APPARENTLY
PERSUADED HENRY KISSINGER TO GO BACK TO EGYPT TO
NEGOTIATE SINAI TWO. KISSINGER HAS
CONCEDED TO ME THAT JORDAN'S EXCLUSION WAS A MISTAKE.
THE PLO WAS GIVEN THE MANDATE A FEW WEEKS LATER AND
ISRAEL BEGAN SAYING THAT IT WOULD ONLY NEGOTIATE WITH
JORDAN. THAT SHOULD TELL YOU SOMETHING.

BORCHGRAVE -- BUT IF ISRAEL IS WILLING TO RETURN THE
WEST BANK TO JORDAN, WOULDN'T IT THEN BE INCUMBENT UPON
YOU TO RESUME THE MANDATE, REGARDLESS OF WHATEVER KNOTS
ARE STILL TIRED?

KING HUSSEIN -- WITH THE PROSPECT OF TOTAL PEACE, WHICH
WOULD HAVE TO MEAN THE COMPLETE RECOVERY OF THE
TERRITORIES CONQUERED IN 1967, INCLUDING SOVEREIGNTY
OVER ARAB JERUSALEM, JORDAN WOULD FIND IT IMPOSSIBLE TO
REFUSE THE LIBERATION OF ARAB LAND. BUT WE WOULD HAVE TO
STIPULATE THAT ONLY THE PALESTINIANS THEMSELVES COULD
DECIDE THEIR FUTURE. THEY WOULD HAVE TO BE ABLE TO
EXERCISE SELF-DETERMINATION AFTER THEIR LIBERATION UNDER
CONDITIONS OF TOTAL FREEDOM FROM ANY FORM OF PRESSURE,
INCLUDING JORDANIAN PRESSURES.

BORCHGRAVE -- WHAT DOES THIS MEAN IN PRACTICAL TERMS?

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KING HUSSEIN -- THEY COULD GO IT ALONE OR, MORE LIKELY,
MAY CHOOSE CONFERATION WITH EAST JORDAN. BUT THESE
ARE OPTIONS AND THE DECISION MUST REST WITH THE
PALESTINIAN PEOPLE.

BORCHGRAVE -- IN A GENUINELY FREE ELECTION, WITHOUT ANY OUTSIDE THREATS OR PRESSURES, HOW MANY VOTES DO YOU THINK THE PLO WOULD GET?

KING HUSSEIN -- WITHOUT ISRAELI OCCUPATION AND WITHOUT ANY DURESS, THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY WOULD MORE THAN LOIKELY VOTE FOR A LARGE DEGREEE OF AUTONOMY COUPLED WITH STRONG CONFEDERAL LINKS WITH JORDAN. AFTER ALL, THEIR TIES WITH THEIR RELATIVES AND BRETHERN HERE RPT BRETHERN HERE ARE TOO STRONG AND BASIC AND PLO IN ANY EVENT STANDS FOR THE PALESTINIAN LIBERATION ORGANIZATION. SO SURELY ONCE LIBERATION IS ACCOMPLISHED AND RIGHTS RECOVERED; SUCH AN ORGANIZATION WOULD CEASE TO HAVE A REASON TO EXIST. IT WILL THEN HAVE LOST ITS RAISON D'ETRE.

BORCHGRAVE -- YOU TOLD ME LAST JULY THAT YOU FELT THE WEST AND EAST BANKS ARE INSEPARABLE DESPITE THE RABAT SUMMIT DECISIONS. WEST BANKERS AND PALESTINIANS, YOU ADDED, HAVE TO BE CONSULTED. HOW CAN ISRAEL EVACUATE THE WEST BANK WITHOUT KNOWING WHAT WILL HAPPEN THERE? AND WHAT ABOUT NORMAL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS?

KING HUSSEIN -- IN THE FIRST PLACE ISRAEL MUST RELINGUISH WHAT IT OCCUPIED BY FORCE, BUT FAR MORE IMPORTANT FOR THE FORESSEABLE FUTURE ARE MORE PRACTICAL AND DOWN TO EARTH MATTERS BEFORE NORMAL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS CAN BE RPT CAN BE ESTABLISHED -- SUCH AS THE WEST BANK'S LINKS WITH GAZA, DUAL SOVEREIGNTY OVER AN OPEN JERUSALEM, THE CITY AND SYMBOL OF PEACE, THE DIVISION OF WATER RESOURCES, RESETTLEMENT OF

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EPOPLE, REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, AIR CORRIDORS, AND WITH PEACE THE END OF EMBARGOES. ALL MATTERS THAT BRING WITH THEM PEACE IN A NEW ERA OF IMMEDIATE FRUITFUL COOPERATION ON THE BROADEST SCALE.

BORCHGRAVE -- HOW CAN ONE SETTLE THE PROBLEM OF JERUSALEM IN THIS CONTEXT?

KING HUSSEIN -- AS AN OPEN CITY OF PEACE, WITH ARAB EAST JERUSALEM AND ISRAELI WEST JERUSALEM. IT IS PERFECTLY NORMAL THAT ARABS SHOULD MANAGE THEIR OWN MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS, UST AS THE ISRAELIS WANT TO MANAGE THEIRS. BUT IN THE CONTEXT OF PEACE, JERUSALEM AT LONG LAST COULD BECOME THE TRUE HOME OF ALL BELIEVERS IN GOD.

BORCHGRAVE -- SYRIA SAYS SADATA HAS SPLIT THE ARAB

WORLD, WHICH MAY BE TRUE, AND THAT THE WHOLE AREA IS
ON THE VERGE OF ANOTHER EXPLOSION, WHICH I CAN'T SEE.
WHAT'S YOUR OWN ASSESSMENT?

KING HUSSEIN -- IF THE RIFT IS NOT HEALED, RECENT
DEVELOPMENTS DEAL A MAJOR SETBACK TO PEACE IN THE AREA.
THERE WILL BE CONVULSIONS AND UPHEAVALS, A SERIES OF
EXPLOSIONS, WHOSE CUMULATIVE IMPACT COULD PROVE JUST
AS SERIOUS AS ANOTHER ARAB-ISRAELI WAR TO ALL -- BOTH TO
THE AREA AND TO WORLD PEACE.

BORCHGRAVE -- HOW CLOSE IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH
SYRIA? THERE IS MUCH TALK OF A JOINT MILITARY COMMAND
BETWEEN JORDAN AND SYRIA.

KING HUSSEIN -- THERE IS NO SUCH THING BUT ATTEMPTS ARE
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UNDERWAY TO TRY TO STANDARDIZE ORGANIZATION AND MILITARY
DOCTRINE. NO JOING COMMAND COULD FUNCTION ADEQUATELY
WITHOUT SUCH LONG-RANGE PLANNING BEING ACCOMPLISHED
HOWEVER. IN OTHER AREAS, THE TWO COUNTRIES HAVE INDEED
DRAWN CLOSER, COORDINATING AND HARMONIZING SCHOOL
SYLLABUSES, CUSTOMS PROCEDURES, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
SHARING WATER RESOURCES, CONNECTING THE POWER GRID
SYSTEMS AND MANY OTHER AREAS. UNQUOTE - END TEXT
PICKERING

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